

Any two pieces of wire joined or twisted together have been counted as one and the wire was measured as it came from the nest—it was not straightened out. Included in the wire framework were two twigs 6 in. long and  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. thick.

A short length of rope, which was very frayed and mostly in single strands, a few eucalyptus leaves, two white feathers and a handful of dried grass furnished the lining to the nest. This nest was found in a eucalypt in 1960 on the Dale River, 12 miles west of Brookton.

— R. H. STRANGER, Wembley.

## OBITUARY

### BRUCE W. LEAKE

Bruce Wyborn Leake, a foundation member of the W.A. Naturalists' Club, and a noted Kellerberrin naturalist, died in Perth on July 22, 1962. He was born at Cobham, York, on June 11, 1880, son of Robert Buck Leake, who pioneered the family's Kellerberrin properties by settling at Mooranoppin in 1868. Bruce Leake lived at "Cardonia," Woolundra, near Kellerberrin, where he established a merino stud. He carried on active farming until 1960 when he retired to live at Mt. Lawley.



Bruce W. Leake, 1921

Though he was a keen field naturalist, and he was a foundation member of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union as well as of the Naturalists' Club, these farming activities took an increasingly large part of his time and he was compelled to allow his membership to lapse. During his ornithologically active period several visiting naturalists called on him at "Cardonia." The ornithologist Tom Carter stayed there on several occasions (including January 1903, May 1919 and March 1922) and collected bird specimens. At the close of the first R.A.O.U. congress in W.A., in October 1920,

W. H. D. Le Souef and A. J. Campbell spent a weekend at "Cardonia." Later visitors included Edwin Ashby (during the R.A.O.U. congress of 1927) and Major H. M. Whittell. These ornithologists were all driven around the neighbourhood in his buggy and pair, as Bruce Leake did not acquire a motor car until 1934.

He formed a collection of local birds' eggs and added to it a collection of British eggs obtained from Mr R. Triekett, of Coolup. This collection is still at "Cardonia" in the care of his son, Mr. Frank H. Leake.

Though he published little in scientific journals he contributed important articles in Perth weeklies, and some of these, summarising the fluctuations in the local fauna, were based not only on his own but on his father's records. His most important personal achievement was the hatching of Mallee Fowls' eggs in an artificial mound he constructed in an enclosure at his home, transferring eggs to it as they were laid in a mound in the bush. The experiment succeeded and the young were reared. Besides formal articles he contributed natural history items to the "Mutual Help" section of the *Western Mail*, conducted by the agricultural editor, H. Catton Grasby.

Publications by Bruce Leake include:

- 1921. The Dingo. Methods of Trapping and Poisoning, Observations on its Life and Habits. *Bull. Dept. of Agric. W.A.*, 94: 19 pp.
- 1921. Black-breasted Plover and Young. *Emu*, 21 (2), October: 148-149.
- 1927. The Mallee Fowl or Gnow (*Leipoa Ocellata*). *The Western Mail* (Perth), May 5: 39-40; photos [on this article was based a paper by E. Ashby, "Notes on the unique methods of nidification of the Australian Mallee-Fowl (*Leipoa ocellata*) with original data supplied by Bruce W. Leake, R.A.O.U.," *Auk*, 46 (3), July, 1929: 294-305].
- 1929. Pioneers of Kellerberrin. The Death of Edward Clarkson. *The Eastern Recorder* (Kellerberrin), August 16.
- 1939. Dry Cycles have been Frequent. *Western Farmers' Gazette* (Perth), November 10 [describes variations in the seasons since 1860 and fluctuations in the abundance of various animals].
- 1950. Pastoral Pioneers of the Eastern Wheatbelt. *Western Mail* (Perth), August 17: 20-21 (with map); August 24.
- 1951. Eastern Wheatbelt Wildlife. (1). *Western Mail*, June 14: 63. (2), June 21: 63, 69. (3), June 28: 63. (4), July 5 [an important record of the fluctuations and changes of status of mammals in the Kellerberrin district since white settlement].
- 1952. Birds of the Eastern Wheatbelt (1). *Western Mail*, May 22: 55, 61. (2), May 29: 55. (3), June 5: 55, 65. (4), June 12: 52, 53 [a similar record of the fluctuations of the birdlife in the district].
- 1961. *Reminiscences*. Privately published [includes a general account of the natural history and of the native people of the Kellerberrin district; the 1927 article on the Mallee Fowl is reproduced in full].
- 1963. *Eastern Wheatbelt Wildlife*. Privately published [deals more specifically with the natural history of the district].

—D.L.S.